(c) the efforts Government are making to raise the forest based employment?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) Large number of tribal population is dependent on forests. However, estimates of percentage and number are not available at the macro level.

(b) The Government of India have set up National Medicinal Plants Board to encourage natural production of valuable herbs in the form of *in-situ* conversation and cultivation of such plants in the country. During the last three years more than 1500 projects, ahve been sanctioned to various Government Orgainzations, individuals, Non Government Organization etc. for conservation and production of medicinal plants in the country including tribals areas also.

(c) The Government have provided employment and livelihood opportunities, through the Joint Forest Management programme and by implementing National Afforestation Programme through Forest Development Agencies, in the states which is targeting 104 million mandays wage employment during 10th Five Year Plan.

BRT System

4689. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 'Bagota' model would soon mark Delhi breathe easy by adopting the Bus Road Transport (BRT) system;

(b) whether the ministry has undertaken any study about using the BRT system in Delhi and other cities;

(c) if so, the findings of the study undertaken in this regard; and

(d) whether Government are thinking of stopping pollution in the cities like Delhi, Hyderabad by adopting BRT system?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) to (d) The Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi (IIT Delhi) and the Institute of Transportation and Development Policy (ITDP), United States have undertaken studies and recommended ways to introduce the 'Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) System'. As per the conclusions of the study, implementation of BRT System can provide benefits of time saving by bus commuters, reduction in traffic

congestion and increased road safety. Feasibility studies have been initiated in cities like Delhi and Hyderabad for using the BRT system.

Forest Land

†4690. SHRIMATI KAMLA MANHAR: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) national average of forest land in the country;

(b) the percentageof geographical area of Chhattisgarh State covered with forest; and

(c) whether any proposal is under consideration of Government for compensating expenditure being incurred on maintenance of forest area of the State having more forest area than the national average?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) As per the State of Forest Report, 2001 published by the Forest Survey of India, the national average of recorded forest area in the country is 23.38% and forest cover is 20.55%.

(b) The percentage of geographical area of Chhattisgarh State covered with forest is 41.75% as per the State of Forest Report, 2001.

(c) In response to the representations made by various States, the Twelfth Finance Commission has recommended a grant of Rs. 1000 crores to the States for maintenance of forests. This amount has been distributed among the States based on their forest area and is required to be spent for preservation of forest wealth. The state-wise and year-wise details of this grant are enclosed as statement.

Statement

State-wise & Year-wise details the Grants-in-aid for maintenance of forests

(Rs. in crore)

S. No. State	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2005-10
1 Andhra Pradesh	13.00	13.00	13.00	13.00	13.00	65.00
2 Arunachal Pradesh	20.00	20.00	20.00	20.00	20.00	100.00
3 Assam	8.00	8.00	8.00	8.00	8.00	40.00
4 Bihar	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	5.00
5 Chhattisgarh	17.00	17.00	17.00	17.00	17.00	85.00

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi